

NIO # 2117-14

THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20505

20 September 1974

Major General John A. Wickham, Jr., USA  
Military Assistant to the Secretary of Defense  
Department of Defense

Dear John:

Per our 18 September conversation, attached is a xerox copy of the version of the Secretary's letter to General Goodpaster that you gave me, on which I have made a few editorial suggestions. These are all made in red ink, with one exception: the suggested insert which, if you want to use it or some modified portion of it, could be run as a new second paragraph of the letter.

As I discussed in our meeting with the Secretary there is little I would be inclined to disagree with in the draft text as it now stands, but I do think one or two additional ideas could perhaps profitably be incorporated. The language of General Goodpaster's 28 May letter suggests some confusion in his mind about what is entailed in the concept of "warning time" (or at least what I consider entailed in it). Also, for entirely understandable reasons General Goodpaster is concerned (quite properly) with NATO's need for a proper readiness posture, but this focus seems to have deflected him from paying much attention to the inherent risks of what I call "ping pong escalation." You will note a passing reference to this in my suggested addition to the draft text's final paragraph. Though that reference is quite brief, what I have in mind is simply the danger of our making certain preparatory moves in response to any initial augmentation of Warsaw Pact capabilities, with our moves -- in turn -- generating Soviet concern that leads the Soviets to make further augmentation of their capabilities, to which we then respond, etc., etc. As indicated in the informal note I gave the Secretary on this matter, we should not forget the lessons of July 1914.

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If I can be of any further help, or if you or the Secretary want any further amplification of these thoughts, please let me know.

  
George A. Carver, Jr.  
Deputy for National Intelligence Officers

Attachment

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